

## RFP Questions and Clarifications Memorandum

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**To:** Vendors Responding to RFP Number 3898 for the Mississippi Department of Medicaid

**From:** Craig P. Orgeron, Ph.D.

**Date:** August, 3, 2016

**Subject:** Responses to Questions Submitted and Clarifications to Specifications

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### RFP Number 3898 is hereby modified as follows:

#### 1. Section VII: Technical Specifications, Item 7.3 is being modified:

The schedule should allow ~~(15)~~ ten (10) working days so DOM approval of each submission or resubmission of a deliverable.

#### 2. Section II: Proposal Submission Requirements, Item 14.1 is being modified:

The State's contact person for the selection process is: Bill Brinkley, Technology Consultant, 3771 Eastwood Drive, Jackson, MS 39211, 601-432-8149, [debra.spell@its.ms.gov](mailto:debra.spell@its.ms.gov), [bill.brinkley@its.ms.gov](mailto:bill.brinkley@its.ms.gov).

The following questions were submitted to ITS and are being presented as they were submitted, except to remove any reference to a specific vendor. This information should assist you in formulating your response.

**Question 1:** The RFP states it is a 10-week project beginning October 1, 2016. However, DOM states in Section VII, 7.3 to allow 15 working days for DOM approval of each deliverable. In addition, in Section VII, 8.5.3 The Vendor may begin analysis only upon acceptance of the raw data by DOM. In Appendix A, Article 1 of the Professional Services Agreement, the end date for this contract is December 31, 2016. Questions:

- A. Can you discuss the impact of the 15 working day DOM approval process on the 10-week timeline?
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**Response:** As stated in Section VII, Item 5.1, DOM expects the project timeline to be approximately 10 weeks in duration; proposed alternative timelines must include justification. DOM has revised its 15 working day review requirement to 10 days. DOM will work expeditiously to review deliverable submissions and does not anticipate any delays in the review process, but reserves the right for the full 10 days of review.

B. Can you clarify the statement that work is halted between the submission of the raw data and the approval of DOM? How does this approval process impact the 10-week timeline?

**Response:** According to Section VII, Item 8.5, DOM expects the Raw Data Feed to be provided to DOM for review. DOM will work expeditiously to review deliverable submissions and does not anticipate any delays in the review process of the Raw Data Feed. The Vendor is free to work on components of Deliverable #4 and #5 that are not dependent on approval of the Raw Data (Deliverable #3).

C. Given the 10-week timeline commences on October 1, 2016, do you expect all of the work to be completed by December 31, 2016

**Response:** Yes, that is the expectation. If an alternative schedule is proposed, the Vendor must provide justification.

D. In addition, DOM has a 15% holdback to be paid after CMS approval. Can the contract end date of December 31, 2016 be moved into 2017 to allow for these approvals?

**Response:** DOM will take this under consideration and will address the matter with the awarded Vendor during contract negotiations.

**Question 2:** In Section VII, 10.4.6, it indicates key staff members must be fully committed to this project during the term of the contract. Does this requirement apply during the 15 working day approval periods when little or no project work is happening or during the CMS approval period which can frequently take several months?

**Response:** Please see amendment 1 above. DOM has revised the 15 working day review requirement to 10 days. Although DOM does not anticipate taking the full 10 day deliverable review cycle, as stated in the RFP, we reserve the right to take up to 10 days per deliverable. DOM's expectation is that Key project staff should be committed and available during the review process to make requested revisions to the deliverable or to commence work on other project work. If Vendor believes this requirement is onerous, Vendor may take exception and propose an alternative. If an alternative schedule is proposed, the Vendor must provide justification.

**Question 3:** Can you confirm the 15-day approval period refers to "working days (M-F)" not "calendar days" in all cases in the RFP?

**Response:** Confirmed, the 15 10 day approval period refers to working days. Please see amendment 1 above.

**Question 4:** Section 10.4.3 states that key staff is "required to be on site during various times" – can you specify a % of time that key staff will be expected to spend on site?

**Response:** DOM assumes Vendor is referring to requirement Section VII, Item 10.4.2. DOM has no pre-determined requirements for what work must be done onsite. The Vendor must utilize their discretion to propose onsite percentages based on their proposed methodology, approach, and past experience to meet the schedule and the requirements of the RFP.

**Question 5:** Section VII, 2 General Overview and Background - Will you identify the name of the contractor who performed these services in 2010? What was the contract value for that work?

**Response:** The contractor for 2010 was Public Consulting Group. The contract value can be found at: [www.transparency.ms.gov](http://www.transparency.ms.gov).

**Question 6:** Section II, #8 - Is it acceptable to provide the required electronic copy of the proposal in a .PDF format?

**Response:** Yes, .PDF format is acceptable.

**Question 7:** Section VII, #5.4 - Will ITS consider a finite two-week presence to meet the onsite requirements followed up with virtual meetings and teleconferences, subject to State approval?

**Response:** Refer to the State's response to Question 4.

**Question 8:** Section VII, #5.4 - Will ITS consider a proposal that is able to perform the project 100 percent virtually and meet all project outcomes?

**Response:** Refer to the State's response to Question 4.

**Question 9:** Section VII, #14 - Please clarify the timeframe for any value-added services proposed by bidders. For example, should value-added services comply with the 10-week project timeframe or will they be determined on a case-by-case basis?

**Response:** Value added services will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

**Question 10:** General Question - What data will be made available to the successful contractor? Will you provide access to the current HIE adoption data? Provider files?

**Response:** DOM has some information on providers including provider locations, some contact information, and other data. Any data DOM has that can reasonably be provided to the Vendor shall be provided upon award.

**Question 11:** For items in the RFP that Vendors are requested to address in two separate sections, will it be sufficient to refer the evaluator to a later section where an item is discussed in more detail?

For example, *Section VII, Subsection 7. Project Management* states that "Vendors must describe, in the proposal submitted in response to this RFP, the project management methodology and associated Project Management Plan that will be used to manage the Environmental Scan project." *Subsection 8.3 Deliverable 1: Project Management Plan/Schedule* also addresses the project management plan/schedule. Can you please clarify whether addressing this item in detail in one of these two sections will be sufficient?

**Response:** If a Vendor believes they have adequately addressed a requirement in a previous section, they may refer the reader/evaluator back to that section in addressing a separate requirement. However, Vendor must carefully reference the previous response, including the Section and Item Numbers, so that the response can be easily located.

**Question 12:** Section VII, Subsection 1.1 states “Beginning with Item 2 of this section, label and respond to each outline point in this section as it is labeled in the RFP.”

Can you please clarify whether each vendor must respond to each sub-section specifically? For example, within section 5. Technical Requirements for the Environmental Scan, is each vendor required to respond to Sections 5.4.1 and 5.4.2 separately?

**Response:** **Yes, the Vendor must respond to each sub-section separately as described in Section VII, Technical Specifications, Item 1.**

**Question 13:** Is it possible for MS DOM to share the list of 27 facilities that were involved in the previous Environmental Scan prior to the proposal due date (rather than at project initiation, as stated in the RFP), for pricing purposes?

**Response:** **No, however the data from the previous Environmental Scan can be reviewed in the State Medicaid Health Information Technology Plan (SMHP) at: <https://medicaid.ms.gov/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/StateMedicaidHealthInfoTechPlan.pdf>**

**Question 14:** As part of the Environmental Scan Findings, the Contractor is to conduct a comparison to the HIT environment in 2010 and discuss changes and trends since 2010. What, if any, historical data and/or findings from the previous Environmental Scan will be shared with the Contractor to facilitate the completion of this requirement? How will this information be shared (i.e. format)? Will the information shared go beyond what was summarized as the Environmental Scan Findings and presented in the SMHP?

**Response:** **Refer to the State’s response to Question 13 for the location of the previous Scan data in the SMHP. All of the documented and applicable information needed to accomplish the RFP requirements as it relates to the 2010 Environmental Scan is found in the SMHP that is publically available at that link. DOM can have discussions about additional information and trend with the awarded Vendor.**

**Question 15:** Section VII, Subsection 6 states the following: “Vendor must present results that comply with CMS requirements for (i) the as-is portion in § 495.332 “State Medicaid health information technology (HIT) plan requirements. Each State Medicaid HIT plan must include all of the following elements...”

Will the vendor be responsible for the SMHP sections as listed in Subsection 6.1.1, Bullets i through iii, or are these components considered to be part of the environmental scan findings write-up for the SMHP? Should the vendor anticipate that the environmental scan report and scope is meant to address Subsection 6.1 in its entirety?

**Response:** **Section VII, Technical Specifications, Item 6.1 is a reference to the SMHP. Vendor should become familiar with the current SMHP and should present the Environmental Scan information to DOM in such a way as to be conducive to easily updating the SMHP. DOM will be responsible for the actual update to the SMHP based on data provided by the Vendor.**

**Question 16:** The initial survey of healthcare professionals for the environmental scan in the SHIP focused on eligible professionals (eligible for the Medicaid EHR incentive program). Does the targeted audience described in section 5.4.2 include only EPs, EHs, etc., or also non- EPs and non-EHs?

**Response:** The scan must include samplings from all healthcare providers. However, data on EPs, EHs and Medicaid providers must be specifically designated and appropriate statistics identified.

**Question 17:** Is there more information on the previous survey methodology? For example, does EP for the survey refer to the type of professional (the CMS-approved provider types) or that a survey respondent was truly eligible for the program (provider type, volume, and other requirements)? Was it a statistically significant sample? If so, what was the methodology used to identify a statistically significant sample?

**Response:** The final results of the previous environmental scan are available in the SMHP. Refer to the State's response to Question 13 for the location of the previous scan data in the SMHP.

**Question 18:** Does the State desire for the successful bidder to recreate the previous survey to try to track changes over time? If so, a detailed description of the previous methodology will be necessary.

**Response:** The final results of the previous environmental scan are available in the SMHP. Refer to the State's response to Question 13 for the location of the previous Scan data in the SMHP.

**Question 19:** Does the State envision that the in-person interviews will be to discuss EHR adoption, HIE issues, or both?

**Response:** The State is expecting the Vendor to make those decisions based on their proposed methodology, approach, schedule and the requirements of the RFP.

**Question 20:** Did hospitals complete a survey during the last environmental scan other than the IT readiness survey from the MHA?

**Response:** Refer to the State's response to Question 13 for the location of the previous Scan data in the SMHP.

**Question 21:** Section III.13. Vendor Personnel: The State requests that we provide and certify the required information for each individual included in the proposal. Please confirm the intent of "certify" in this context. For example, is it sufficient to include a statement indicating that an individual is proficient in spoken and written English?

**Response:** A statement indicating that an individual is proficient in spoken and written English would be sufficient certification in this context.

**Question 22:** Section VII.2. General Overview and Background: The State notes completion of a prior environmental scan. Did the State contract with a vendor to conduct that scan, and if so, who was the awarded vendor?

**Yes, Public Consulting Group.**

**Question 23** Section VII.10.11.4.3.1. Project Staffing: In regards to the reference to a Project Management Professional, is the PMP certification required or preferred of the Project Manager? If the PMP certification is a contract requirement, could another staff member who has this certification instead be included to support the Project Manager with project management functions of the contract?

**Response:** Per Section VII, Item 10.11.4.3.1 the Project Manager's resume shall include the PMP Certification number. If the Vendor believes this requirement is onerous, Vendor may take exception and propose an alternative.

**Question 24:** What is the State's approved or allocated budget for this work?

**Response:** **The State does not disclose this information. However, all State Agency budgets are considered public record and may be viewed at [www.dfa.ms.gov](http://www.dfa.ms.gov).**

**Question 25:** Appendix A – Standard Contract (RFP page 58) indicates that “A properly executed contract is a requirement off this RFP.” However, a properly executed contract is not listed as an item on the ITS RFP Response Checklist. Please clarify:

a.) If the bidder does not have exceptions to the standard contract terms and conditions, is a signed Appendix A – Standard Contract required to be submitted with the proposal?

b.) If the bidder would like to propose exceptions to the standard contract terms for the State's consideration, is a signed Appendix A – Standard Contract required to be submitted with the proposal?

**Response:** **a) Appendix A: Standard Contract, goes on to state: “After an award has been made, it will be necessary for the winning Vendor to execute a contract with ITS.” A signed copy of Appendix A: Standard Contract, should not be included with the Vendors' proposal.**

**b) Vendor's should refer to Section V: Proposal Exception, for instructions regarding how to take exception to contract terms. A signed copy of Appendix A: Standard Contract, should not be included with the Vendor's proposal.**

**Question 26:** Please confirm our understanding that bidders are required to submit proposals hard copy and electronic) and that no documents are required to be uploaded to the MAGIC portal.

**Response:** **Confirmed, no documents are required to be uploaded to the MAGIC portal in responding to this RFP.**

**Question 27:** RFP Section II.9.2 indicates that “When an outline point / attachment is a statement provided for the Vendor's information only, the Vendor need only read that point. The Vendor acknowledges having read and accepting, or taking exception to, all sections by signing the Submission Cover Sheet and providing a Proposal Exception Summary Form.

However, RFP Section VII.1.3. Indicates that, “ACKNOWLEDGED” should be used when no vendor response or vendor compliance is required.” Please clarify.

**Response:** **MDOM assumes Vendor is referring to Section II, Proposal Submission Requirements, Items 2 and 9.9 which covers the RFP in its entirety. Section VII, Technical Specifications, Item 1 directs Vendors on how to respond to Section VII specifically.**

**Question 28:** RFP Section II.14.1 indicates that Bill Brinkley's email address is [debra.spell@its.ms.gov](mailto:debra.spell@its.ms.gov). Please confirm that all correspondence to Bill Brinkley relative to this solicitation should be addressed to [bill.brinkley@its.ms.gov](mailto:bill.brinkley@its.ms.gov).

**Response:** **Please see amendment 2 above.**

**Question 29:** RFP Section VII.10.4 indicates that “The Vendor must provide in the RFP response individually signed acknowledgements of all proposed staff indicating that they understand the work required and commit to the required work in the RFP within

the specified schedule.” Please clarify if this section requires bidders to provide a signed letter of intent from each proposed staff.

**Response: Yes.**

**Question 30:** RFP Section VII.1.1 indicates that “beginning with Item 2 of this section . . . “Please clarify that Item 2 of this section is “General Overview and Background” and that Item 2 is the starting point for bidder item-by-item responses.

**Response: Confirmed.**

RFP responses are due Thursday, August 11, 2016, at 3:00 p.m. (Central Time).

If you have any questions concerning the information above or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Bill Brinkley at 601-432-8149 or via email at [Bill.Brinkley@its.ms.gov](mailto:Bill.Brinkley@its.ms.gov).

cc: ITS Project File Number 42313